



REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON REDISTRIBUTION
PROCEDURE APPOINTED BY RESOLUTION OF THE LEGISLATURE,
APRIL 5, 1968.

On April 5, 1968, the Legislative Assembly adopted the
following Resolution:

"BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Assembly appoint a
Special Committee of the Legislature consisting
of the following Members:

Hon. F. Colborne (Chairman).
Hon. Mr. Speaker.
Mr. L.E. Buckwell.
Mr. J.W. Horan.
Mr. L. Leavitt.
Mr. R.M. Wiebe.
Dr. H.M. Horner.
Mr. L. Hyndman.
Mr. W. Dickie.

to study various methods in use in Canada for
redistributing Legislative seats, whether by
Independent Commission, Legislative Committee
or a combination of these methods, and to
recommend to the next regular Session of the
Legislature the method considered best suited for
adoption in Alberta, together with recommendations
for guide rules and draft legislation, if required,
as may be considered necessary to give effect to
the Committee's recommendations, and to the
possible alternatives".

1. Gathering of Information.

The Committee held its first meeting on Thursday 25th
April, 1968, at which time it was decided to gather whatever

information/



information was available from the Provinces of Canada and the Federal Government on redistribution procedures including existing legislation, any plans for new redistribution procedures and transcripts of debates on the question of redistribution. Certain other information of value to the Committee was also obtained including maps, statistics and redistribution reports.


2. Public Briefs.

Advertisements were placed in the daily and weekly papers of the Province announcing establishment of the Committee and advising that the Committee would receive written briefs from all interested parties and organizations. A deadline for receiving briefs was set at 30th June, 1968.

3. Briefs Received.

The response to our advertisement was disappointing. At the deadline of 30th June no brief had been received from any organization in Alberta. However, in July a request was received from the Alberta Wheat Pool for an extension of time in order that they might present a brief to the Committee. An extension was granted to 31st July, 1968. At that deadline the Alberta Wheat Pool was the only organization that had indicated any interest in the Committee's work.

Subsequently/



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Subsequently requests were received from the Calgary Chamber of Commerce and the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce for a further extension of time in order that they might make submissions to the Committee. Another extension of time was granted and briefs from these two Organizations were accepted in September, 1968.

4. Public Hearings.

The three Organizations that submitted briefs made oral presentations of the briefs on 7th October, 1968, in the Legislative Building.

5. Redistribution in other Provinces.

In addition to the briefs received, Committee members considered methods of redistribution of Legislative seats used in other Provinces, with the exception of Newfoundland. A summary of each of these follows:

MANITOBA.

A permanent Electoral Boundaries Commission was established by legislation in 1957 consisting of the Chief Justice of Manitoba, the President of the University of Manitoba and the Chief Electoral Officer. Redistribution was undertaken in 1957. An amendment

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of Commerce and the Education Board of Commerce for a
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to the Committee. Another extension of time was granted and
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1935

Public Hearing.

The three organizations that submitted bills were given
presentation of the bills on 7th October, 1935, in the
Legislative Building.

Redistribution in other provinces.

In addition to the bills received, Committee members
considered methods of redistribution of legislative seats west
in other provinces, with the exception of Newfoundland. A
summary of each of these follows:

MANITOBA.

A permanent Electoral Redistribution Commission was established
by legislation in 1925, consisting of the Chief Justice of Manitoba,
the President of the University of Manitoba and the Chief Clerk of
the House. Redistribution was undertaken in 1927, 1930 and 1935.

in 1967 required the Commission to sit again between the first day of July and before the last day of December, 1968, and every ten years thereafter.

The establishing of a quotient involves taking the census figure provided by the Statistics Act (Canada) and dividing by the number of seats in the House (57). From this basic figure, a tolerance of +25% for urban districts and -25% for rural districts is intended, to allow for extremes of population density to be taken into consideration. Urban districts are defined by name in legislation and all others are deemed to be rural districts. An urban-rural vote ratio of 7 to 4 in favour of rural areas is now used. However a proposal now being considered would establish a 6 to 4 ratio in favour of rural areas.

With population content maximums and minimums thus indicated, the Commission is instructed to give regard to areas of community interest, means of communication, physical features that tend to form areas into integral units. Insofar as is possible, the whole area of any municipality should be contained within one electoral boundary.

NOVA SCOTIA.

Redistribution is undertaken by ad hoc select committee of the Legislature whose recommendations are submitted to the Legislature in the form of amendments to the House of Assembly Act.

in 1957, the Commission to sit again between the first day of July and before the last day of October, 1958, and every two years thereafter.

The establishing of a quorum involves taking the census figure provided by the Statistics Act (Canada) and dividing by the number of seats in the House (27). From this basic figure, a tolerance of +25% for urban districts and -25% for rural districts is intended, to allow for extremes of population density to be taken into consideration. Urban districts are defined by law in legislation and all others are deemed to be rural districts. An urban-rural vote ratio of 7 to 4 in favour of rural seats is now used. However, a proposal now being considered would establish a 6 to 4 ratio in favour of rural seats.

With population constant maximum and minimum limits indicated, the Commission is instructed to give regard to such of community interest, means of communication, physical features that tend to form areas into integral units. Interest as far as possible, the whole area of any municipality should be contained within one electoral boundary.

NOVA SCOTIA

Distribution is undertaken by ad hoc select committees of the Legislature whose recommendations are submitted to the Legislature in the form of amendments to the House of Assembly Act.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

The new Election Act of 1967 passed in New Brunswick indicates that the electoral boundaries are also county boundaries as far as possible and each of the resultant districts is allocated a number of members specified in the Act.

ONTARIO.

No redistribution between 1933 and 1954. An independent commission appointed in 1962 resulted in there being 117 members returned in the general election of October, 1967. Anticipated legislation at the next Session will establish the Chief Electoral Officer as permanent redistribution commissioner who will work towards presentation of the information to the next commission which will be held following the census of 1971.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

Following the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform of 1960 and the passage of its recommendations into legislation, one electoral district was eliminated. The storm of protest that followed resulted in Government reinstating the district so that the net result of the operation was to increase the legislative seats from 30 - 32. No further ventures into this field are anticipated at the present time.

QUEBEC.

A Committee of 46 members appointed a sub-committee consisting of the Chief Electoral Officer, one government member and one opposition member. The Legislature dissolved in 1966 and the Committee was never re-appointed.

SASKATCHEWAN.

Redistribution is undertaken by amendments to the Legislative Assembly Act introduced by the Government. An opposition motion proposing the institution of an independent commission for the purpose of seat redistribution in the 1968 Session was defeated.

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Redistribution largely a matter of Government decision. A Commission of Inquiry into Redefinition of Electoral Districts submitted a report in 1966. The recommendations therein were only partially adopted in Legislative amendments.

From the foregoing information it seems clear that only two Provinces of Canada have established any form of permanent independent Electoral Boundaries Commission. Three Provinces have used Legislative Committees exclusively and four Provinces

redistribute by Government initiative only but two of the latter have received recommendations from Government appointed Royal Commissions before introducing redistribution amendments.

6. Redistribution Formula.

No Province of Canada has adopted the principle of representation strictly by population, however, some Provinces have recognized the need to shift representation to reflect increased urbanization.

The Federal Government has adopted a formula which provides for a 25% differential in the distribution of seats within each Province. This formula is not applied to the distribution of seats between the Provinces and the Territories. An entirely separate formula exists for that purpose in the British North America Act where certain exceptions also are provided which make special cases of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, the Yukon and North West Territories. Area representation is also provided through appointments to the Senate and this representation does not take population into account.

Manitoba uses a formula which provides a plus 25% differential for urban districts and a minus 25% differential for rural districts.

No formula exists for other Provinces as far as the Committee could determine.

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COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:1. Redistribution Commission.

After carefully considering the alternatives the Committee recommends that a Commission composed of

- (a) A Judge of the Supreme or District Court,
active or retired, nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council,
- (b) The Chief Electoral Officer (Clerk of Executive Council),
- (c) An independent citizen nominated by the Speaker,
with concurrence of the Premier and Leader of the Opposition,
- (d) Two members nominated by the Leader of the Opposition - one from the largest and one from the next largest opposition parties in the House,
- (e) Two Government members nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council,

be appointed by Lieutenant-Governor in Council to carry out the drawing of electoral boundaries in accordance with the formula hereinafter recommended.

2. It is recommended that redistribution be carried out after every second General Election but in no case more frequently than

once every eight years.

3. It is recommended that the voter population figures from the most recent General Election should be used in the application of the formula of distribution.
4. It is recommended that the first Commission be appointed at the present Session of the Legislature or as soon thereafter as possible and that subsequent Commissions be appointed at the time of the first regular Session following each second General Election but not earlier than every eight years.
5. It is recommended that the Commission be required to report and submit its recommendations to the Speaker of the Legislature not later than December 1st in the year the Commission is appointed, and that the Speaker publish the recommendations forthwith in the Alberta Gazette and release to the news media the recommendations together with any maps contained in the Commission's report.
6. It is recommended the Commission be permitted to make such amendments to its report as it deems advisable as a result of representations which it may receive following publication of the report; but the period for amendment of the report not extend beyond February 15 of the following year. Amendments should be published in the same manner as provided for the main report.

7. The Committee has taken note of the marked shift in population distribution as between urban and rural areas of the Province and believes that a corresponding shift in representation is desirable. The Committee recognizes that in a Province such as Alberta which is characterized by large areas of sparsity of population there are limitations to the extent to which such a shift can properly be made. However, the following recommendations will provide a distribution of seats which will bring Alberta closer to representation by population than any other Province of Canada:

It is recommended -

- (a) That the Legislative Assembly Act be amended to provide that there shall be urban constituencies established at the following places -

Calgary	Camrose
Edmonton	Drumheller
Lethbridge	Grande Prairie
Medicine Hat	Wetaskiwin
Red Deer	St. Albert.,

with the population of Sherwood Park included in Edmonton representation.

- (b) That the number of urban constituencies be determined by dividing the total voter population of urban constituencies as shown on the list of Electors from the last General Election by a figure 25% above the average for all constituencies in the Province; the

remaining/

remaining seats to be designated as rural seats.

NOTE: This provision will ensure that the densely populated areas of the Province shall contain constituencies with the largest population and that the more sparsely populated constituencies which are the largest in area will contain the smaller populations.

- (c) That the number of seats in the Legislature be increased to 75.

The Committee was uncertain as to whether or not this recommendation fell within its terms of reference. However, the increase is considered justified on two grounds -

1. The rapid growth of the Province in population and in the magnitude of legislative business.
2. The desirability of not increasing in area the very large rural constituencies which exist in several parts of Alberta.

If the proposed increase were made the formula recommended in this report would result in the establishment of 38 urban seats and 37 rural seats.

- (d) That the Commission shall make urban constituencies as nearly as possible equal in voter population but may vary from this in consideration of areas of

projected population growth.

- (e) That the boundaries of an urban constituency shall not extend beyond the corporate limits of the corporate body for which it is named except as provided in the following exceptions:
- i. Where the corporate body other than Calgary and Edmonton contains a voter population which is more than 25% greater than the average for urban constituencies. The Commission shall divide the area into such areas of approximately equal population as is necessary to reduce the voter population of each to not more than 25% greater than the average for urban constituencies, and may add to such constituencies from adjacent rural areas such area as is necessary to bring the voter population to a figure not more than the average for urban constituencies.
 - ii. Where the voter population of the corporate body for which the constituency is named is more than 25% below the average for urban constituencies, the Commission shall add from the adjacent area such area as is necessary

to/

to bring the voter population to a figure not more than the average for urban constituencies.

iii. In no case shall the voter population of the rural area which is added to an urban constituency exceed the constituency's urban population, but in adding adjacent rural area the voter population of incorporated towns and villages shall be considered as urban voters for purposes of this calculation.

(f) That all areas of the Province not included in urban constituencies as provided above shall be included in rural constituencies.

(g) As a general rule the boundaries of rural constituencies shall be drawn on the basis of density and sparsity of voter population with the areas of greater density containing the largest voter population and the areas of greater sparsity containing the smallest voter population. The present areas of great sparsity of population should not be enlarged in area.

(h) In establishing all constituency boundaries the Commission shall consider community and diversity of interest, geography, established lines of

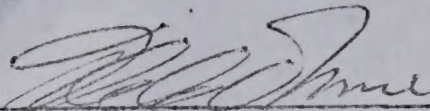
communication, accessibility of regions and density or sparsity of population.

8. The Commission shall hold such public hearings as are considered necessary to enable interested persons to make representations on all matters within the jurisdiction of the Commission and in particular during the period between publication of the Commission's report and expiry of the period in which amendments may be made by the Commission to its report.
9. The Commission's recommendations shall be subject to ratification by the Legislative Assembly and the Assembly may amend it by Resolution. Any such amendment shall be included in the legislation prepared to give effect to the Commission's report.
10. The Government shall place before the Legislature at the Session which receives the Commission's report a Bill incorporating the recommendations of the Commission and any amendments to the Commission's report made by the Legislative Assembly.
11. The Bill when assented to shall come into force on Proclamation and the Bill shall be proclaimed prior to the next General Election.

12. Minority Opinion.

The Committee was not unanimous in its recommendation with respect to the establishment of designated urban constituencies (7a) nor on the recommendation contained in (7b) which specifies the manner in which the 25% differential is applied to areas of density and sparsity of population.

All of which is respectfully submitted.



HON. F.C. COLBORNE.

Chairman.

Date:

April 2nd, 1969.

The following was not discussed in the investigation with respect to the investigation of the listed urban communities (10) but on the other hand, it is noted that the number of units in the 125th Street area is small and the density and variety of population.

DATE DUE

